

SCHOOL BASED SERVICE WORKERS

The Children's Division (CD) is committed to close collaboration with schools and supports two methods for a more direct connection. CD has based several Children's Services Workers in schools throughout the state in a collaborative project with the schools to provide early intervention and prevention services.

The first method of close collaboration exists when a CD employee is placed in the school district. The service worker provides a vital link to community organizations and other services. They offer early service intervention to families whose children have been identified as being at risk of familial, social, and/or educational difficulties. CD staff assists the schools to promote healthy emotional development through the provision of Family-Centered Services. This on-site availability serves to prevent further child abuse and neglect referral, Juvenile Court involvement, and the potential for out-of-home care.

The second method of close collaboration exists through the School Based Service Worker Grant Program. This grant is available to all schools districts in the State of Missouri. This grant provides a partial funding for the salary for the School Based Service Worker. The school applies for the grant by writing a proposal that includes their rationale of the position, job descriptor, salary information, and demographics of the school. The basic philosophy for the school-based service worker's role is the early identification and intervention of children at risk of child abuse and neglect. There are 100 slots allocated statewide for this program based on Federal Appropriations, with a maximum contribution per position by the Children's Division of \$12,049.80. The service worker is an employee of the school district and CD pays 35% of the salary. The Division provides basic child abuse and neglect training to new hires. CD provides the school district technical support. A yearly training institute was held until budget constraints required they be discontinued. This institute concentrated on workshops that dealt specifically with issues pertinent to the school based service worker.

Both types of school based service workers report their activities through an outcome tracking system. This information is compiled to determine the number of students and families that are being assisted by this program and the accomplishments of such services. The information also includes the type of referrals that the social workers are receiving to use as a base to determine future workshops and training. Due to restrictions under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools do not report identifying information on children and families served, and instead report aggregate numbers of children and families serviced categorically.